

How Much Should I Give?

The Report of a Royal Commission

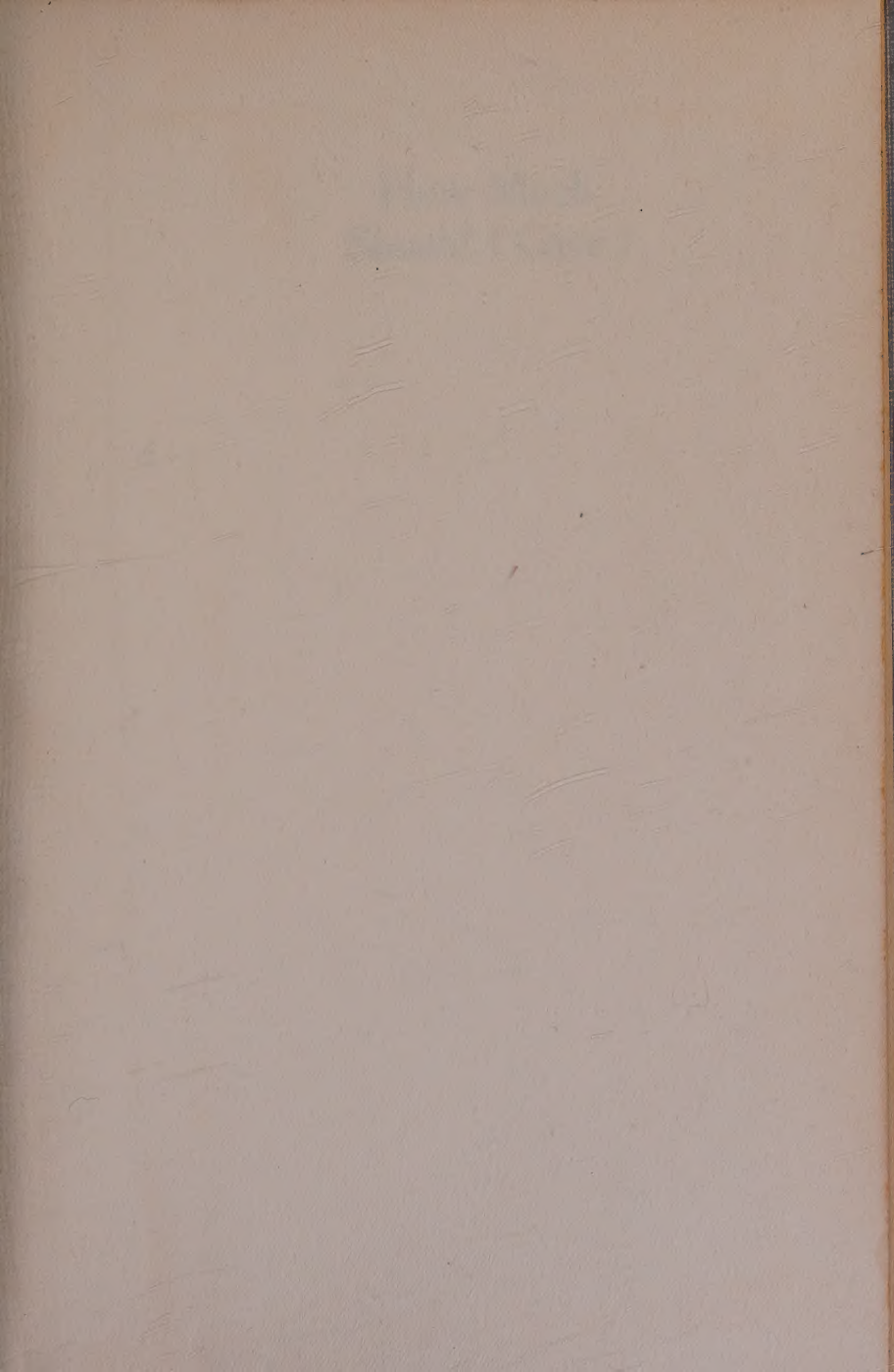
on

What Proportion of His Income a Christian
should Dedicate to the Cause of God.

by

W. C. Senior

BV
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1926



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by

W. C. Senior

Secretary of the Stewardship Committee
of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec



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INTRODUCTION

No subject is of more vital importance than that of Christian Stewardship. The recognition of God's ownership of life and possessions is essential to a true Christian faith and experience. Around this great principle a man's daily life and activities must be organized if it is to be, in reality, Christian.

Few men have given more attention to this fundamental subject than has the author of this little book, Mr. W. C. Senior, whose conferences with groups of men in the Churches throughout Ontario and Quebec have resulted in many instances in the adoption of new standards of living and giving.

In the following pages he deals with one specific phase of the subject. Very

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INTRODUCTION

wisely he does not spin any fanciful theories nor does he dogmatize on the question. Rather, through an arresting and novel method of presentation he seeks to have the Scriptures give their own answer to the pertinent and personal question which is the theme of discussion. His conclusion is based upon the fact that while a man may choose or refuse to make Christ his Lord, having once accepted His Lordship it is incumbent upon him to do as He bids.

Many will join in the prayer that the book may be largely used in leading men to a deeper and more practical allegiance to the Master and to His cause.

H. C. PRIEST.

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How Much Should I Give?

The Report of a Royal Commission

on

What Proportion of His Income a Christian
should Dedicate to the Cause of God

THE COMMISSION CONSTITUTED

“**H**OLY MEN of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” And they have answered the above question. From the Scriptures we may examine the testimony of these witnesses in detail. Desirous to know what the mind of God is and believing these Holy men were commissioned to

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declare it we will call upon them one by one. Let us consider ourselves a commission solemnly appointed in the presence of God the Judge to give an honest finding on the evidence to be submitted to us on the question, what proportion of his income should a Christian dedicate to the cause of God, and determine whether any believer can consistently devote less than one-tenth. The first witness will be Abraham whose testimony is of value inasmuch as he was known as the friend of God. An inspired writer in the New Testament expresses approval of his conduct in giving tithes to Melchizedek, that mysterious prototype of the Christ. "Consider how great this man was unto whom *even* the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."

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THE WITNESSES CALLED

Abraham—

“God found me in Ur of the Chaldees, rapidly sinking with my fathers into Idolatry. He called me in His sovereignty, and sanctified me by His grace. He honored me with the names ‘Father of the faithful’ and the ‘Friend of God.’ Deeply did I feel my obligation to Him, but especially on some peculiar occasions when He interposed remarkably on my behalf, and not only preserved me and mine, but enriched me with increased substance. At such times in token of my gratitude, I devoted the tenth of what He had given me to His immediate service. I did so because my heart prompted me to honor my benefactor; because it was right in itself; and

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because I knew either from express revelation or the practice of God's people in those days that such an offering was, and would be, accepted by the Lord.

"This is the amount of my testimony and for further information on the subject I refer you to my distinguished grandson Jacob, the younger son of my beloved Isaac."

Jacob—

"I have hearkened to the speech of my honored and venerated forefather and heartily do I acquiesce in all he said. It is manifest from the light of nature as from the Law of God, and the practice of His people, that our obligation should be acknowledged to God by the dedica-

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tion of some part of our property to Him. My grandfather has told you what his practice was—that on every special occasion of increase to his property he gave a tenth to God. I have done the same, but I have also gone further. Early in life I was favored with a gracious revelation of the Lord, and was much moved by it. My selfishness and my love of the world led me into sin and that sin drove me from my father's house. After my first day's wanderings I sank down exhausted in body and sore at heart. I thought of my home, my father's home from which my sin had driven me out. I looked up to God that night as I had never looked up to Him before. He was the God of Abraham and of Isaac and He was not unmindful of their penitent son. I 'dreamed, and behold, a ladder set upon the

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earth and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. And behold the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac.' The promises made to my fathers were then renewed to me, and more were added. From that day I came into a new experience of God and I vowed a vow unto Him, That if He would be with me, and keep me, and give me bread to eat and raiment to wear so that I come again to my father's house, that I should worship Him and return unto Him one-tenth of all that I should receive—and as a token of my pledge unto Him I erected a pillar of stone in that place.

“This experience made a great change in my life. Before, all was for the world and for self, now all is for God and I

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seek to master myself. Sometimes in the activities of this life I forgot my vow but God in His providence reminded me of my duty, and roused me to the performance of it. Thus I had the express approval of the Lord to my practice and so I continued to pursue it as long as I lived. The practice comprehended my whole life and my whole property. This is my testimony.”

What saith the Lord on the duty of devoting our substance to Him? This is the enquiry under consideration. We have heard from Abraham and Jacob. Moses will now give his testimony. He bears with him the statutes of God written by himself at the express command and dictation of Jehovah.

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Moses—

“My forefathers Abraham and Jacob have told you how it was at the beginning. A tenth was the proportion in which it was the custom to make acknowledgment of God’s claim upon their substance. Some hundreds of years have passed since their days. The world has grown older, and its obligations to the Most High have been made known much more clearly; especially has this been true through my life time. Jacob did not rehearse to you that in the later days of his life, owing to famine conditions, he and all his sons with their families went down into Egypt where, through the powerful influence of his beloved son Joseph whom he had mourned as dead, they were given possessions in the land of Rameses by command of Pharaoh.

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“For many years with the good hand of God upon them our fathers lived in obedience to Him and prospered to such an extent that when a new king, who knew not Joseph, arose over Egypt, he looked with jealousy and disfavor upon them and declared, ‘The people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than the Egyptians.’ Therefore did he set over them taskmasters, and reduced them to slavery and great affliction so that our fathers cried unto God by reason of this bondage. It was then that I was born. Pharaoh had charged that ‘Every son that is born to the Israelites should be put to death.’ My mother hid me and God raised me ‘out of the water’ and I was named ‘Moses’. God placed me in the high courts of Egypt where I had the advantage of education and training in all the ways of the Egyptians.

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When I became a man God called me, 'Come now therefore and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.' And now it became necessary to gather and number and organize all the families of Israel for training and discipline, that they should be brought back to their own land and, according to promises given to our fathers Abraham and Jacob, become the chosen of God, through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. To this organization he has delivered written oracles and in them he has embodied in the form of laws, authoritative principles and practices that are to guide their lives and become the rule of their conduct. In these statutes we have the laws concerning the giving of material substance unto the Lord. They are no long-

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er to be guided only by the practice of their fathers, they now have an express statute that reveals to them what is the will of God in the important question of the proportion of their substance that should be devoted to religious service in acknowledgment of His right of ownership. I will not rehearse to you from the statutes the proportions that are to be set aside for the feasts and the sacrifices and the national gatherings of the people, nor will I include the ample provisions which the Lord requires of his people for the care of the poor and the needy. We are inquiring concerning that which is to be devoted expressly to the support of the sanctuary, and that which deals with principles evidently intended for authoritative guidance to all peoples of the earth at all times.

“From the beginning one-tenth was

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the proportion well known and understood by the people. They thought of it as the amount pleasing to God. It was recognized as a rule of conduct. It was known by all the servants of Jehovah. It was therefore without question recognized and received when it was embodied in the statutes of Israel (*holding up the roll*) that "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord,—and concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord even unto the place of His habitation—shall ye bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and your heave offerings, and your vows, and your herds and of your flocks—and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the Lord.'

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“It is manifest that God’s purpose in all of this was to train His people in habits of generous and willing-hearted giving and thus overcome and offset the natural tendency in the human heart and mind toward those great enemies of the soul—selfishness and covetousness. But a matter of far greater significance now enters into the giving of one-tenth of their possessions to God, because that in this offering there is *a token of their redemption*. From the beginning a peculiar sanctity was given in the Israelitish home to the first-born son—and especially after that terrible experience, when the destroying angel passed over; and in the houses of the Egyptians the first-born son of every home was slain, while God by His great mercy and by the sign of the blood saved their own sons. From that day, in token of that great deliver-

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ance, God laid claim to the first-born males. He said unto me, 'Separate unto Me all the first-born sons among the children of Israel, they are Mine.' He claimed the consecration of the eldest son in every home for the priesthood. The office of the priesthood belonged to the eldest son. The time soon came when an extensive plan of sacrificial and public worship was introduced requiring a company of men to be exclusively devoted to this ministry. The tabernacle was built in the wilderness and the Levites were chosen for the priestly service. Then it was that at the command of God all the first-born sons of Israel, with the Levites, were gathered and numbered according to their tribes—and twenty-two thousand two hundred and threescore and thirteen first-born sons were redeemed man for man by as many

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Levites and the latter became the ministers in the priesthood in the place and the stead of the first-born. By command of God the tenth was now devoted to the support of the Levites in their holy ministry. Hereafter when the God-fearing Israelite presented his devoted tenth to the Lord it was not only the acknowledgment of God's sovereign ownership and the provision for the ministry of the tabernacle, but it was a token of the price paid for the redemption of his first-born son.

"The testimony which I bear, therefore, is that a tenth of one's possessions is the lowest proportion ever recognized by our fathers—it is the proportion authorized by Jehovah in the statutes of our people, which under divine direction I prepared. I would have you notice, also, that in addition to this statutory obliga-

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tion, the Lord delights in the free-will offerings of His children beyond the tithe, as is clearly seen when He lifts their hearts away above the legal requirements and challenges them 'Every man shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee.' "

Following the testimony that we have received from Abraham, Jacob and Moses we now call to the stand David, the great king and sweet singer of Israel, that he too may testify, especially as to the spirit of the giving of the children of Israel in the public worship of God.

David—

"You enquire concerning the bringing in of the tithes and offerings of the con-

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gregation to the house of the Lord. I, David, can well testify concerning this, for ever and always this service was central in the worship of the Lord, our God. When His people gathered in His glorious habitation, the bringing in of the gifts was accompanied with great demonstration of joy and gladness and with music and singing.

“When Jehovah laid upon me to establish the worship of His people, at His command we did appoint certain of the Levites to minister before the Lord with music and with singing. Four thousand of those of the sons of Levi, who were cunning with the harp, the psaltery, the cymbals and other instruments of music, formed the orchestra of the house of the Lord together with Heman, the leader of the Songs of the Lord, and his family

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choir of two hundred and eighty-eight voices, and so it was that when the offerings were presented, they were presented with songs, with music and with great rejoicing.

“My forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Moses, have told you of the proportion of their substance that our fathers encouraged the congregations to vow unto God, and ofttimes in His holy Psalms, which by His command I have written, He calls upon His worshipping people to bring in their offerings and pay their vows unto the Most High. I would bear testimony to the spirit in which the princes and the people obeyed His Divine command.

“Will you picture the scene when the tithe of the herds was brought to the City of God, or was converted into money to

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send to Jerusalem, or after being fed on the rich pasturage of the Levitical city suburbs, was driven toward the court of the temple. Gladness inexpressible filled the hearts of the devout worshippers. Hill answered hill with the echoes of their singing and shouting and praising. 'Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem—Jerusalem, beautiful for situation,—Zion, set on a hill,—out of the perfection of whose beauty God hath shined.' Hallelujah! And the awakening city answers, Hallelujah!

“Hear them as they chant their joyful song—

The chariots of God are twenty thousand
Even thousands of angels,
The Lord is among them,
They have seen Thy going, O God,
Even the goings of my God,
My King, in the Sanctuary.

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Because of thy temple,
O God, at Jerusalem,
The kings, the princes, and the people,
Bring presents unto Thee.

“Or hear them again as the great orchestra and choir sing responsively—

Sing unto the Lord a new song,
Sing unto the Lord all the earth,
Sing unto the Lord, bless His name,
For the Lord is great
Greatly to be praised.

Give unto the Lord, O, ye people,
Give unto the Lord, glory and strength,
Give unto the Lord great glory,
Bring an offering and
Come into His courts.

Rejoice before Him, ye heavens,
Rejoice before Him, ye hills,
Rejoice before Him, ye fields.

All the earth shall worship Him
And sing praises unto His name.

“Thus may you know the spirit in which the children of Israel brought

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their gifts unto the Lord with no thought in the minds of any of them, rich or poor, princes or people, that less than one-tenth of their possessions would be pleasing either to themselves or to the Lord God.

“In bearing my testimony I desire to relate briefly one of the closing experiences of my long and eventful life.

“Our God loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob, therefore I greatly desired to build an house unto the Lord God. I was unhappy in that I dwelt in an house of cedar, while the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord remained under curtains. I made known my desires unto God and He dealt graciously with me. He said unto me ‘Thou shalt not build me an house, but thy son, (Solomon), which

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shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build me an house, and I will establish his throne forever.' I bowed myself unto the ground and worshipped Him. From that day my life was devoted to the preparation for the house that my son should build Him. I commanded all the princes, the priests and the people to set their heart and their soul to seek the Lord, and to bring in their offerings that Solomon might build an house unto our God. In the Chronicles of the Kings you will find the story of the joyous and willing-hearted response of the people. It was as a crown of glory, greater than that which was of gold upon my head. Gold and silver with precious stones in abundance were poured into the treasury of the Lord by the joyful people. So great was the abundance that we were humbled before our God and confessing

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our sins we rendered our praise unto Him. 'Who am I and what is my people, that we should be able to offer willingly after this sort, for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.'

"And all the congregation of Israel blessed the Lord God of their fathers and bowed down their heads and worshipped before the Lord and before the king."

It is fitting that following David, Solomon should bear his testimony to the way the work of the Lord was supported in his day.

Solomon—

"David, the king my father, hath told you how that during all the days of his

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life he desired to build an house to the glory of the name of the Lord God of Israel, and how that God said unto him, thou shalt not build me a house, but thy son, that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name.

“My father loved the house of the Lord. As I bear witness of him in memory I hear him sing ‘How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts, my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the houses of cedar.’

“You now enquire about the measure of the giving of the people for the worship service of the house of the Lord.

“I was obedient unto the command of my father and we built unto the

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name of the Lord God an house. As it was with my father when he commanded the people to bring in their offerings that the temple should be built, so was it at the dedication of the house. The gifts of the people were beyond measure, for there we offered the offerings of the congregation, twenty-two thousand oxen and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep, and while we offered, the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed this great offering and the glory of the Lord filled the house in so much that the priest could not enter the house of the Lord, because of the manifestation of His glory, and the people without measure and without stint brought their offerings unto the Lord and bowed themselves with their faces upon the pavement and worshipped and praised His holy name.

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“Indeed it is such wonderful experiences as this that I have recited unto you that has taught me the truth of many of the Proverbs that, taught by the Spirit of God, I have written and given unto you. It was true of the Children of Israel, as it is always true, ‘there is that scattereth and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse, but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it. Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first-fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses burst forth with new wine.’

“This is my testimony, taught me by the living God, of the measure and of the

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spirit of giving to the worship of His glorious name.”

Hezekiah—

“I was but a young man when I came to the throne of my father Ahaz. Our fathers had transgressed and done that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord, our God.

“They had forsaken Him and turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord—and ‘turned their backs.’ They had neglected the priesthood of the house of the Lord. The priests and Levites had forsaken their holy office to get themselves unto the fields that they might secure bread; also they had shut up the doors, put out the lamps, ceased to burn incense, and to offer burnt offerings in the holy place, wherefore, the

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wrath of God was upon them, and He had delivered them to trouble and to hissing, as was manifest before their eyes. I, therefore, sought the Lord God. I made a covenant with Him. I called back the priests and the Levites that they should cleanse the house of their God and should stand before Him and minister before the altar, offering their sacrifices. The priests went into the house of the Lord and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple. Then commanded I the princes and the Levites and the people, and the congregation brought in their offerings and they sang praises with gladness and they bowed their heads and worshipped. Moreover, I commanded the people to give their portion to the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged and sustained in the land of the Lord.

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“As soon as the commandment went abroad, the people brought in abundance, the first-fruits of corn, wine, oil, honey, and all the increase of the field, the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly; the tithe of oxen and sheep, the tithe of the things made holy by separation unto the Lord God, and they laid them by heaps. When I and the princes came and saw the heaps we blessed the Lord, and His people Israel. Then questioned we the priests concerning the heaps. And Azariah, the Chief Priest, said, ‘since the people began bringing the offerings into the house of the Lord we have enough to eat and plenty; for the Lord blessed His people, and that which is left is this great store.’

“My testimony is, therefore, that when our people failed to bring in at least one-tenth of their substance, the priests of

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the Lord grew destitute and discouraged, and they were unable to devote themselves to the services of the house of the Lord. The house of the Lord was forsaken and fell into disrepair. God's wrath was upon us and great calamity and shame overtook us, until we humbled ourselves in His presence, and confessing our sins brought our offerings unto Him. But when the offerings began, the song of the Lord began, with the trumpets and the music ordained by David of Israel."

Malachi—

"You enquire about the proportion of one's possessions that the followers of God should render to Him, in support of the services of His house. God called me to be a messenger to His people when

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exceeding dark days had fallen upon their religious life. The spirit of the world had most overwhelmed them. It was a time of great anxiety, even they that feared the Lord were almost swerving from the path of loyalty.

“The priests were offering a scant service and were profaning their office and despising the name of their God by offering polluted bread upon the altar, bringing the table of the Lord into contempt. The people were withholding their tithes and bringing for sacrifice the blind, the sick, and the poorest of their herds and their flocks. Many were denying God’s claims upon their possessions altogether. Consequent upon this their religious life was weak, their spiritual vision dim, their moral and social condition sinful and wretched. Then it was God sent me to them to call them back

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to Himself and the message He gave me for them was directly related to their manner of life and their tithes and offerings. 'I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an offering at thy hand. A pure and a whole offering shall be offered unto my name. Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of Hosts and my name is dreadful among the heathen.'

"God was very severe on the priests who should have been examples unto the people. 'O, ye priests, if ye will not hear, if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, I will send a curse upon you, I will curse your blessings. Yea, I have cursed them already because ye do not lay it to heart.' The curse of

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God did come upon the people. Famine and drought and the devourer was upon them, and the people suffered and sinned in their God-cursed confusion. In their misery God, through me, called again unto them. 'Return unto me and I will return unto you.' But they said, wherein shall we return?

'Cease robbing me. Ye have robbed me. In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse. Ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.'

"Then it was that in the name of God I challenged this people with this great challenge. And this is my testimony and my challenge unto you all this day:

"Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not

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open you the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

In the matter of honoring the Lord with our substance and giving to the support of the ministry of the sanctuary we have heard the testimony of the fathers of the house of Jacob. We now call for the testimony of the Apostles of the New Testament.

The Apostles—

We were present when the New Testament Church was ushered into the world amid the glories of the day of Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

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“We did not forget that we were Jews and amenable to the law of Moses. We were taught by the Master as we sat at His feet that the mere ceremonies having served their purposes were to cease, ‘as the stars disappear when the sun arises in the heaven,’ but the eternal principles of the ancient law remained. The duty of honoring the Lord with our material substance remained in full force, and as our privileges increased our responsibilities also increased. The method of giving to the Lord practised by our fathers was not disallowed by Jesus our Lord. So far as they are related to the development of men and to the relationship of man to God they are the same yesterday, today and forever. Moreover, there are reasons for generous giving now that did not exist before. The obligations to

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Jesus under which we have been laid have constrained to sacrifice altogether new in the church. He gave Himself. What can we withhold? Shall we regard His claims less than the claims set forth in the scriptures? He taught us to search the scriptures. They became our guide, for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in giving as in all righteousness. Jesus taught us many lessons in giving. He did not say, in so many words, a *tenth* or any prescribed proportion, but He surely did assume that the lessons of the law, which the scriptures taught were as a schoolmaster and should not be ignored by those of us who professed the higher and clearer revelations. This assumed, He left it to our own hearts to purpose the proportion we should give. Many, indeed, in the first Christian church sold their possessions

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and goods and yielded them without reserve as the needs arose. Led by our beloved Barnabas they laid their all at our feet.

Every reason exists now, even in greater force, that not less than one tenth should be given. In one great respect is this especially true because unto us is committed the great responsibility to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Jesus bade us go. We dared not hold back. Already we have begun and we may not cease until the name of Jesus the Saviour is borne to every dark land of heathenism, till every child of the great common Father has been brought home.

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Paul—

“I was not present with the disciples on the day of Pentecost. I was then the bitter enemy of Jesus, but from the day when He revealed Himself to me as the Son of God, when I was on the road to Damascus to persecute His followers, I have counted myself a bond slave unto Him. You ask me how we should use our worldly possessions for Him. I can only reply we are His purchased possession. We are not our own. Being bought with a price we can well count all things we possess only of value as they are related to Him. When the Lord called me to bear His name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel, He taught me that I must yield up my all for His name’s sake. A stewardship was committed unto me.

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Henceforth I must live, not unto myself, but unto Him, and this I was also to teach to the churches as they were established and organized among the people. This I failed not to do in Macedonia, in Athens, in Rome, in Galatia and wherever the Spirit of God led me. In Macedonia, even amidst great distress and poverty, they did not relax in this duty.

“In fact it was the great spiritual experience developed by bountiful giving out of extreme poverty that induced me to exhort Titus to visit Corinth in order to develop this very grace of the giving of their substance. My letter to Corinth is well known. I besought them to place this grace alongside of love and faith and diligence. I exhorted them by the willing-heartedness of Macedonia to prove the sincerity of their love in like manner. I reminded them of ‘The grace of

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our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor that ye, through His poverty might be rich.' This was not new to them, for a year before I had instructed them, as I had all the churches of Galatia, that every one of them systematically should store up before hand a certain proportion of their income to be in readiness at any time for distribution. This matter was so important, lest when the money was needed it should not be gathered, that I thought it necessary to send brethren to them to help them get systematic and proportionate methods in operation.

"You ask how much should a man give? I would reply always bear in mind that the Kingdom of God is like a harvest field. Giving to the work of the churches is sowing seed that returns a

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harvest of evangelism, thanksgiving, testimony, prayer and glory to God. He which soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly. He which soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity, for 'God loveth a cheerful giver and He is able to make the grace of giving abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.'

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

"In closing my testimony I would remind you of my word to the generous-hearted and beloved Philippians, 'It is not the money I am anxious for. What I am anxious for is the interest that accumulates in this way to your divine credit.' "

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SUMMING UP THE TESTIMONY

At the beginning we constituted ourselves a commission to gather evidence and on that evidence render our finding on the proportion of his income that a believer should devote to the cause of God. We now summarize the evidence.

It is significant that the earliest instance of worship recorded in the Bible is accompanied by the offering of material possessions to God, in fact, throughout the whole scriptures one is led to feel that the worshipper is not expected to come before the Lord empty-handed. This conception is borne out by a review of the testimony of the witnesses that we have heard.

From Abraham we find it probable

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that from God's earliest dealings with men he taught them that it was their duty to render a portion of their increase to their Maker; Abraham's own offering to Melchizedek, together with Jacob's definite vow, make it plain that in their minds at least, this portion should be not less than one-tenth. When it comes to Moses the tenth emerges out of the mists of the patriarchal practices and becomes a statute in the laws and an institution in the life of the Hebrew peoples. It should be noted that even as God did not give the Sabbath as a new institution, but said, "Remember the Sabbath Day," so He does not refer to the tithe as a new requirement, but reminds the people that "The tithe is the Lord's." It should be noted, too, that the tithe was more than merely giving a part of one's substance, it was the acknowledgment of

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God's ownership of all the possessions of the worshipper. Accordingly, whether it be a tenth or any other proportion, all of it was God's and this was His method of securing from the worshipper acknowledgment of His sovereign ownership. While the tithe was necessary to sustain the ministry of the sanctuary yet the primary concern was that the worshipper should remember and acknowledge his dependence upon God the Giver.

The testimony of David and Solomon indicated the spirit and the joy that marked the worshippers in their giving. We cannot conceive of such outbursts of song and music, of the glad shoutings of the people as they approached the holy sanctuary, where their offerings were central in their glad worship, had these offerings been less than

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that recognized to be the proportion of their increase named in the statutes and therefore pleasing to Jehovah.

As the joy and abounding blessing in connection with their giving was told by David, so the sorrow, sin and shame consequent upon withholding was told by Malachi. There is no question about it, Malachi directly charges their wretched condition to their failure to bring the tithes into the storehouse, and Hezekiah tells how the joy of the Lord returned to them when the offerings began.

Coming now to the New Testament, there is no new testimony concerning the methods and the proportions that a worshipper shall bring to the service of God. But there is the same indication that worship is insincere which comes empty-

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handed. There is stressed the importance of systematic, proportionate, forehanded and bountiful giving. Also the same joy when the people without reserve poured out their substance unto the Lord and to the Apostles. And the tithe seems to be endorsed as the minimum, while free will gifts, over and above, are urged just as they were in the Old Testament. The only difference seems to be that the New Testament exhorts Christians to do as a matter of loving loyalty what in the Old Testament was made a matter of statute. Some years ago Colonel E. W. Halford, speaking in Massey Hall, Toronto, said, "If the tithe is not paid because it is Jewish then proportionate giving is equally Jewish and should not be followed. The Old and the New Testament can neither be divorced, nor put in antagonism; they

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supplement and complement each other. God's law and God's grace are not opposed."

To conclude: It would appear from these Bible Witnesses that the practice of setting aside one-tenth of the income was required by God, and was pleasing to Him because it was, first, a continual reminder to the worshipper, and prevented him from forgetting God. Second, it acknowledged God's sovereign ownership of all of his possessions. Third, it made ample provision for the ministry of the Sanctuary and the care of the priesthood. Fourth, it bore in it a token of Redemption giving it a significant relationship to the sacrifices in their redemptive meaning. Fifth, it was an effectual safeguard against selfishness and covetousness in the personal life of

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the worshipper. Sixth, it was the answer to a continual challenge, that in thus honoring God with his substance he would command God's blessing on his own life and the lives of his loved ones.

The case now rests with the commission. You must decide the question upon the evidence submitted. Weigh the evidence carefully. Read it again from the Word of God and determine, each one of you, whether you can conscientiously give to the service of the Church and the Denominational Missionary work less than one-tenth of your income.

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